



Speech By  
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**MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE**

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## **MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **Federal Election**

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (2.47 pm): Queenslanders are facing an increasingly uncertain future. If there is one thing that 2020 has taught us it is that the leaders of our major parties do not have our backs. Queenslanders are experiencing skyrocketing house prices and rents. We are now facing one of the worst housing affordability crises in history. Queenslanders are experiencing the impacts of climate change. The recent devastating floods and the 2019-20 bushfires are a reminder of what we will face with even greater frequency if we do not tackle climate change. Queenslanders are experiencing a rapid rise in the cost of living, while wages stagnate and health and education remain chronically underfunded.

Politics should be about offering a vision for how we can change society for the better, but as Australians stare down these overlapping crises this election, the leaders of our two old parties seem more interested in personal insults than outlining a bold and positive plan for the future.

Is this seriously the best we can hope for: means tested child care and a pitiful amount of new social homes? Meanwhile, over the last two years, 47 Australian billionaires doubled their wealth to \$255 billion.

Labor and the LNP both support the stage 3 tax cuts—tax cuts for the ultrarich—that will cut \$184 billion out of the budget and see billionaires like Clive Palmer save \$9,000 a year in tax. That is \$184 billion ripped out of the services that Australians need. The ABC reported this morning that the big four banks pocketed \$14.4 billion in profit according to their 2020 half-year results. Together they hold \$1.87 trillion in home loans. This housing crisis has not happened in a vacuum. Some people are getting very rich off the back of this housing crisis and we have seen the big banks' profits soar as people pay massively inflated prices for their homes. Meanwhile on the ground Queenslanders suffer.

We have seen older women facing homelessness in droves. People renting under the National Rental Affordability Scheme are being turned out of their homes as the scheme is being phased out. Any renter in Queensland will tell you that they are treated like a second-class citizen, facing massive rent increases and are not even able to make minor modifications to their home. People's lives are worse because the government cares more about the big end of town than its own communities.

This is not a case of Australia not being able to afford an ambitious vision for the future. No, this is a political choice of the two old parties so deeply entwined with big corporations. We have two major parties that would rather make everyday people suffer than actually go after their big corporate donors. Governments do not want to talk about real reforms that would transform people's lives for the better—things like capping rent increases and building a million affordable homes countrywide—

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Dr MacMAHON:** Do you want to talk about that? They do not want to talk about bringing dental into Medicare, unlimited Medicare covered mental health sessions, cutting power prices with a publicly owned electricity retailer, increasing the pension by \$244 a fortnight and increasing JobSeeker to at

least \$88 per day, scrapping means testing and introducing free child care. These are the bold, exciting and urgent policies the Greens are taking to this election. Here in Queensland these are the policies that are shifting votes to the Greens in Griffith, Brisbane and Ryan and in the Senate. In my part of town having a federal member actually willing to fight for the community—someone like Max Chandler-Mather—would be transformative. As Max knows from the thousands of doorknocks and conversations he has had, it is an ambitious plan that voters are looking for, not the crushing status quo.

The old parties do not want to talk about these ideas. When I tried to introduce a levy on the big banks last year Labor ministers stood up here and argued with great passion that a crossbencher has no right to make such a suggestion and my bill was struck off the *Notice Paper*. We could have had an extra billion dollars in our healthcare system.

We have seen Labor take an even more unambitious policy platform to this election than in 2019. At least then we saw proposals like a phase-out of negative gearing and proper access to abortions. Now we have seen Labor run terrified from the stand they took in 2019. No policy or statement is too conservative for them. What Labor and the LNP do not want to talk about this election campaign are real policies—

*(Time expired)*